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THE COMIC READER

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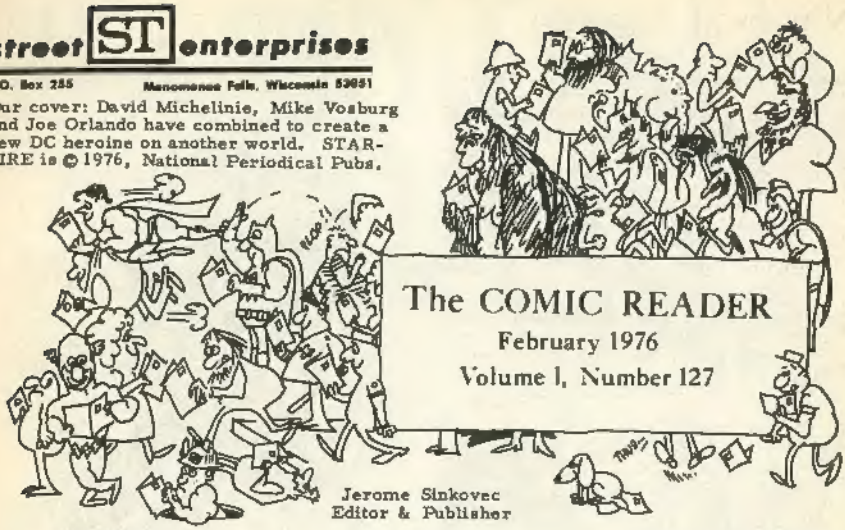
Our cover: David Michelinie, Mike Vosburg and Joe Orlando have combined to create a new DC heroine on another world. STAR-FIRE is © 1976, National Periodical Pubs.



The COMIC READER

February 1976

Volume I, Number 127

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National News

STARFIRE, this month's cover subject, is a new book by Joe Orlando, David Michelinie, Mike Vosburg and Bob Smith. Set on another world, the magazine involves Starfire's background in the employ of a cruel tyrant who shelters her from knowing any other way of life than slavery. Somehow, two races of beings, the Yorg and the Mygorg, are involved, and Starfire ends up confronting them. The first issue is on sale in May. Elliot Maggin will probably take over the writing of STARFIRE with #3.

GREEN LANTERN (and GREEN ARROW) #90 will be out in May and will involve itself with an Aladdin-type story. Also set for May release is a new book from Joe Kubert.

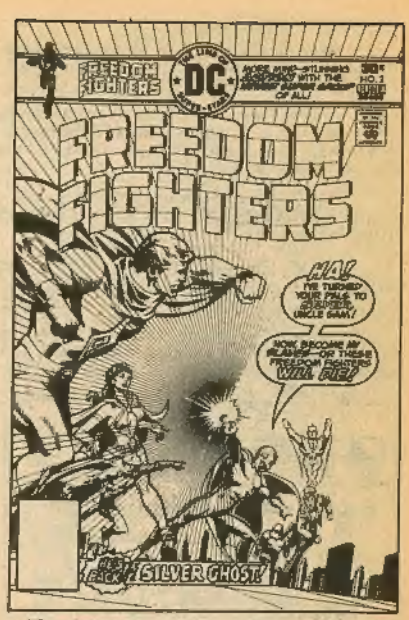
There is talk about reviving MR. MIRACLE in his own book.

The third issue of KOBRA is by Keith Giffen and Continuity Associates and will be the final issue pending sales reports.

Captain Comet, Man Of The Future, will return in SECRET SOCIETY OF SUPER-VILLAINS #2.

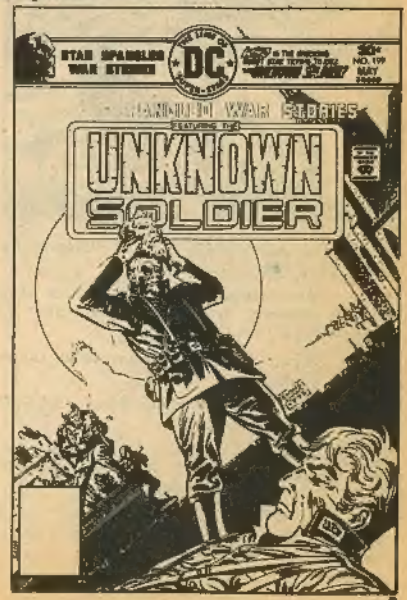
David Kraft will be taking over the scripting of BLACKHAWK with #247.

There is a two part-two issue BRAVE AND THE BOLD adventure upcoming courtesy Bob Haney and Jim Aparo. The first part teams Batman with The Atom to battle Two-Face and The Joker; the second stars Batman and Green Arrow vs. The Joker and Two-Face.



The Super Sons will soon meet the mysterious daughter of an old super-foe of their fathers'.

Dave Kraft and Paul Levitz have each written episodes of TALES OF THE GREAT DISASTER, which begins in KAMANDI #43. Steve Mitchell is inking a Pablo Marcos pencilled episode of that series.



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Bob Haney and Lee Elias have done the second episode of THE MUSKETEERS for DC SPECIAL #23.

Keith Giffen will take over the layouts for ALL STAR COMICS with #60, which introduces a new super-villain called Vulcan, Son Of Fire.

Dave Kraft and Gerry Conway will co-script SWAMP THING with Ernie Chua handling the layouts.

STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES #201 will feature a booklength Unknown Soldier story set in the U.S.

Marty Pasko has written a three parter for THE JOKER in which the Clown Prince of Crime battles the JLA. Marty is also

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dialoguing AQUAMAN and has scripted an issue of KAMANDI.

Speaking of AQUAMAN, Black Mantis will be showing up in a future two-part story in ADVENTURE COMICS.

Carrot Man will appear in an issue of PLASTIC MAN.

Vicente Alcazar has done a PLOP! story.

A new DC writer, Barry Jameson, will take over KARATE KID as of #2, which introduces The Revenger.

CLAW THE UNCONQUERED will be getting a new art team as of #8 -- Keith Giffen and Ricardo Villagran.

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Marvel News

The first new issue of KULL THE DESTROYER (#16) will be released in May. Flashbacks will dominate the first of the series.

Dracula is to be married and have a child!

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The Red Guardian, husband of the Black Widow, is scheduled to be revived in a new incarnation in the pages of THE DEFENDERS.

Sal Buscema is drawing an issue of POWER MAN.

Rich Buckler will be writing, as well as drawing, the DEATHLOK strip in ASTONISHING TALES.

Another artist is in on the story end of a book. Herb Trimpe has done an IRON MAN two parter which he plotted. Archie Goodwin will probably do the dialogue.

Gene Colan is drawing an issue of HOWARD THE DUCK.

Chris Claremont is writing the POWER MAN ANNUAL. Tentative artist is Lee Elias.

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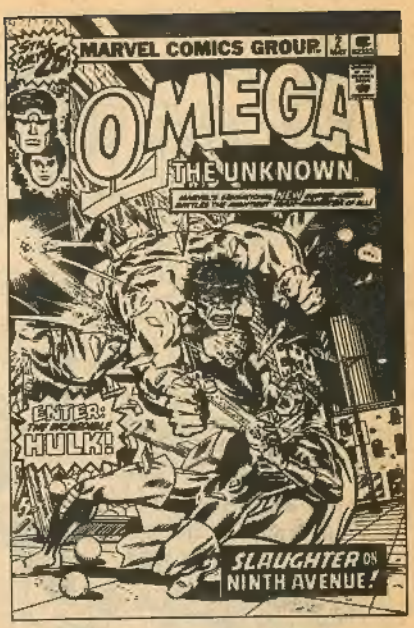
By the way, the ANNUAL series will be issued at a rate of two to four books per month, increasing during the summer months. The books seem to be following the numbering of the old SPECIAL series' that preceded the GIANT-SIZE issues. For example, the March FF ANNUAL is #11; the March IRON MAN is #3. The schedule has fifteen books slated to be released between March and October. Incidentally, the THOR story in the THOR Annual is the one originally scheduled for the THOR THE MIGHTY black and white.

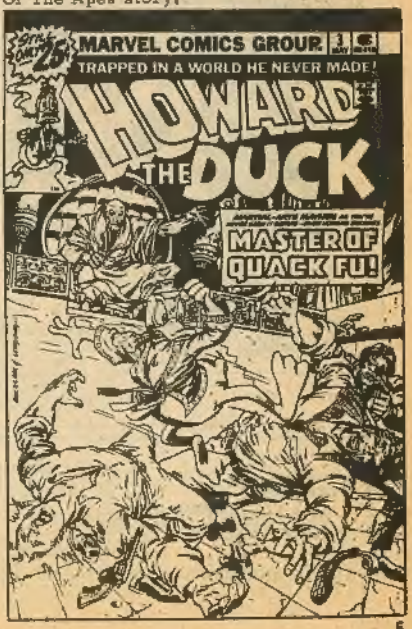
Roger Stern has been named Assistant Editor and is in charge of reprints and letter columns.

The cover of MARVEL FEATURE #4 is a switch on the original Frank Frazetta paperback cover for CONAN. Red Sonja is battling with a man dangling from her leg.



Herb Trimpe will not be inking the CAPTAIN AMERICA TREASURY after all.

Herb Trimpe is, however, working on a fill-in PLANET OF THE APES adventure which is a sequel to the Kingdom On An Island Of The Apes story.



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Warren Coming Comics

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND (124, April). (2/3)

EERIE (73, April). Featured in this issue: "Hunter II" by Budd Lewis and Paul Neary; "Freaks" by Lewis and Leopold Sanchez; "Tomb Spawn" by Rich Margopoulos and Robert Evans and Gonzalo Mayo; "It, The Dead Thing" by Carl Wessler and Jose Gaul; and "Peter Hypnos" by Jose Bea. The cover is by Ken Kelley. (2/5)

VAMPIRELLA (50, April). Stories in this issue include: "Call Me Panther" by Bill DuBay and Jose Gonzalez; "The High Gloss Egyptian Junk Peddler" by Bill DuBay and Esteban Maroto; "Granny Goose And The Baby Dealers" by DuBay and Ramon Torrents; "The Panther and The Bat" by DuBay and Howard Chaykin and Jeff Jones; The Spirit teams up with Vampirella as they investigate "The Thing In Denny Colt's Grave" by DuBay and Jose Ortiz; and "Cold Cuts" by Roger McKenzie and Auraleon. Cover is by Sanjulian. (2/10)

THE SPIRIT (13, April). Reprinted are "The Valentine" from Feb. 20, 1949; "The Robbery" from May 14, 1950; "The Curse" from Oct. 16, 1949; "Water" from April 2, 1950; "Hangly Hollar Mansion" from Jan. 22, 1947; "Pen Head" from April 6, 1947; "The Tunnel" by May 21, 1948; and "Gerhard Snobble" from Sept. 5, 1948. The cover is by Will Eisner (as are all the stories) and Ken Nellet. (2/12)

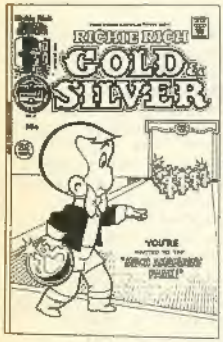
Harvey

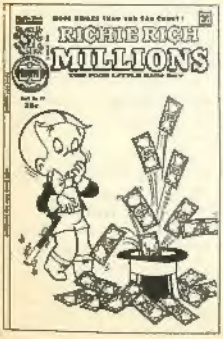
COMING COMICS (all dated May): RICHIE RICH MONEY WORLD #23, RICHIE RICH FORTUNES #28, SPOOKY #150, and HARVEY COLLECTORS COMICS #5 (35¢). On sale February 5.

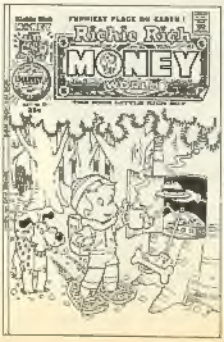
RICHIE RICH #142, RICHIE RICH VAULTS OF MYSTERY #10, LITTLE LOTTA #121 and RICHIE RICH GOLD AND SILVER #5 (35¢) on sale February 12.

RICHIE RICH AND JACKIE JOKERS #15, HOT STUFF #134, RICHIE RICH GEMS #11 and CASPER STRANGE GHOST STORIES #10 (35¢) on sale February 19.

RICHIE RICH MILLIONS #77, RICHIE RICH RICHES #14, SAD SACK #250, and RICHIE RICH BILLIONS #10 (35¢) on sale February 26.







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Charlton News

As of this writing, the contracts which will enable Charlton to release their SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN and EMERGENCY books have yet to be signed. We'll keep you posted.

Coming Comics

KORG: 70,000 B.C. (6, May). Korg and his family are challenged by visits from outer space in "Fantasy" by Pat Boyette. The cover is by Pat Boyette. (2/3)

HONG KONG PHOOEY (6, May). (2/3)

TEEN CONFESSIONS (94, May). (2/3)

TIME FOR LOVE (47, May). (2/3)

SPEED BUGGY (6, May). (2/3)

WHEELIE AND THE CHOPPER BUNCH (6, May). (2/3)

THE GREAT GAZOO (16, May). (2/10)

DINO (16, May). (2/10)

YANG (13, May). Yang courageously meets the challenge of a hired killer in "Death Wears White" by Joe Gill and Warren Sattler. The cover is by Sattler. (2/10)

FIGHTIN' ARMY (124, May). (2/10)

WAR (6, May). (2/10)

BEETLE BAILEY (116, May). (2/10)

BLONDIE (219, May). (2/17)

SPACE: 1999 (4, May). Commander Koenig and his crew are confronted by a maze of space monsters in "Demon Star" by Nick Cuti

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and John Byrne. The cover is by John Byrne. (2/17)

HAUNTED (27, May). "Uncle Stanley's House" -- is it haunted, or is there some other, darker explanation? Nick Cuti and Recreo wrote and drew it. A hot-shot pilot double-crosses an embezzler he's trying to get out of the country, only to be double-crossed by the government of his supposed haven in "The Pay-Off" by Joe Gill, Charles Nicholas and Vince Alascia. An old derelict is changed into a Frankenstein monster by scientists who find they have seomething even more devilish than they figured in "Brain Fever" by Mike Pellowski and Tom Sutton. The cover is by Sutton. (2/17)

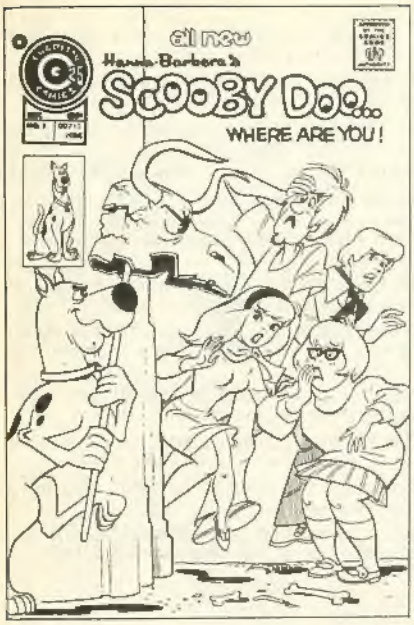
MIDNIGHT TALES (18, May). This issue has a unified theme in its three stories: the attempt to create life! Stories and artwork are by Wayne Howard. Cover is by Howard. (2/17)

FIGHTIN' MARINES (129, May). U.S. Marines are called upon to police rioting Chinese in "The Boxer Rebellion" by Joe Gill and Pat Boyette. An air support mission on Saipan is the setting for "Corsair Jockey" by Gill and Bill Molno. And internal fighting in the Marine Corps forms "The Snafu Squad" in a story by Gill and Marti. (2/17)

SECRET ROMANCES (38, May). (2/17)

DOOMSDAY + 1 (6, May). Boyd, Kuno and Jill are challenged by huge ape-like anthropoids in "All The Beautiful People" by Joe Gill and John Byrne. The cover is by Byrne. (2/24)

VENGEANCE SQUAD (6, May). A wealthy woman enlists the aid of the Vengeance Squad to protect her and her guests during a lavish weekend party on her island in "The



Diamond Queen" by Joe Gill and PAM. The Mike Mauser adventure this time has him attempting to track down the executor of the city's big dope pushers in "Gangwar" by Nick Cuti and Joe Staton. Cover is by PAM. (2/24)

MY ONLY LOVE (6, May). (2/24)

SECRETS OF YOUNG BRIDES (6, May). (2/24)

GHOST MANOR (29, May). A space traveller who breaks the speed of light enters a world of demons in "An Old Man" by Pat Boyette. A man with no face acquires the features of the world's most hated people when stared at in "The Man Who Lost Face" by Don Glut. An ancient Egyptian temple built by Thynos II is the setting for "The Traitor" by Joe Gill and Steve Ditko. The cover is by Boyette. (2/24)

GHOSTLY TALES (121, June). When a 19th century millionaire is murdered, his ghost enlists the aid of his beautiful young widow to take revenge on the murderers in "Eternal Honeymoon" by Joe Gill and Frank Bolle. The manager of the fun house finds a novel way to get a persistent loan shark off his back -- for good, in "Trapped For Murder" by Gill and Charles Nicholas and Vince Alascia. A private eye stalks a vampire and manages to destroy him with the aid of his dead partner in "The Last Bite" by Steve Clement and Steve Ditko. The cover is by (woops! Your guess is as good as ours!). (2/24)

SPACE: 1999 Magazine (4, May) black and white. (2/26)

National Lampoon

Joining such assorted and sundry industries as pizza palaces and exhaust pipe manufacturers, Nat Lamp is coming out with an entire book full of iron-on T-shirt transfers.

NATIONAL LAMPOON (72, March). This is the "In Like A Lion" issue. "The Collected Works Of William Burroughs" isn't by William Burroughs, it's by Ted Mann; everyone contributes to a Monty Python parody; "Snuff Porn Flick" is by P. J. O'Rourke; "National Cocaine Amnesty Week" is by Peter Kaminsky; "Blow Me" is a parody of the "Show Me" book (which was a parody of something else), by everybody and their mailman; "Porno That Will Make You Blind" (don't tell me -- the pages are printed with white blotches on them) is by Norman Rubington; plus Bobby London and Sherri Flenniken contribute two two page comics. (2/17)

Et Al

Fawcett-Gold Medal has issued two paperback editions of DICK TRACY adventures edited by Herb Galewitz. Subtitled HIS GREATEST CASES, #1 is PRUNE FACE and #2 is SNOWFLAKE AND SHAKY. Although the strip is not perfectly suited for the medium (some panel borders are overlapped) I am told that they are complete and enjoyable to TRACY fans. Each is $1.25.

Henry Scarpelli, animator, syndicated artist (TV HEE HEES) and comic book artist for DC, Marvel, Archie, etc., has scripted a movie, THE LAST VICTIM, a suspense film due out in February.

Gold Key

Walt Disney's DONALD DUCK (170, April). New stories. (2/5)

Walt Disney's MICKEY MOUSE (162, April). Reprints. (2/5)

PORKY PIG (66, April). New stories. (2/5)

NEW TERRYTOONS (37, April). New stories. (2/5)

MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER (43, May). A reprint of a Russ Manning story. (2/5)

YOSEMITE SAM AND BUGS BUNNY (35, April). New stories. (2/12)

THE OCCULT FILES OF DR. SPEKTOR (19, April). Another new adventure by Don Glut (rhymes with boot) and Jesse Santos. (2/12)

LOONEY TUNES (7, April). All new stories. (2/12)

FAT ALBERT (12, April). New stories drawn by Winslow Mortimer. (2/12)

WALT DISNEY SHOWCASE (34, April). The bi-centennial reprint this issue is PAUL REVERE'S RIDE WITH JOHNNY TREMAIN from Dell Four Color #822, 1957. (2/12)

UFO FLYING SAUCERS (10, May). New stories by Frank Bolle, Luis Dominguez, etc. (2/12)

BUGS BUNNY (171, April). New stories. (2/19)

THE PINK PANTHER (33, April). New stories by Warren Tufts. (2/19)

BORIS KARLOFF TALES OF MYSTERY (67, April). New stories. (2/19)

LITTLE MONSTERS (33, April). New stories. (2/19)

UNDERDOG (6, April). New stories. (2/19)

GOLD KEY SPOTLIGHT (1, May). Gold Key's new showcase title premieres with TOM, DICK AND HARRIET by Mark Evanier and Lee Holley. (2/19)

TWEETY AND SYLVESTER (56, April). New stories. (2/26)

WALT DISNEY'S COMICS & STORIES (427, April). Some new stuff, some reprints. (2/26)

Walt Disney's UNCLE SCROOGE (127, April). Another Carl Barks reprint! (2/26)

DAFFY DUCK (100, April). This centennial issue features all new stories. (2/26)

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT! (61, April). New stories. (2/26)

TRAGG AND THE SKY-GODS (5, May). New adventure from Don Glut and Dan Spiegle. (2/26)

Archie

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COMING COMICS: (All dated April) JUGHEAD'S JOKES #48, ARCHIE AND ME #82, ARCHIE'S JOKEBOOK #219, BETTY AND VERONICA #244, PEP COMICS #312, on sale January 27.

LITTLE ARCHIE #105, REGGIE AND ME #86, LAUGH COMICS #301, LIFE WITH ARCHIE #168, JUGHEAD #251, ARCHIE #252, on sale February 3.

ARCHIE'S TV LAUGHOUT #39, BETTY AND ME #74, on sale February 10.

EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE #46, JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS #88, ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST #17 and ARCHIE ANNUAL #28, on sale February 17.

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Media News

Hello everyone... The most exciting news of the month is probably the fact that TV GUIDE announced that Diana Rigg and Patrick Macnee have rejoined to film new episodes of THE AVENGERS for British TV. My only hope is that one of the U.S. networks finds a way to fit it into their schedule (perhaps ABC will use it as WIDE WORLD MYSTERY?), although I do have my fingers crossed that the new shows are done on film and not the (ugh!) dreaded videotape which has so enthralled the medium. There's something about the over-lit sets and the ultra-treble sound that turns me off... M*A*S*H fans (as I am) must have noticed that in the 1/6 episode in which Radar is asleep with a comic book in his bunk. The year, which by now, despite frequent anachronisms such as mentioning MacArthur and Harry Truman in the same episode as they mentioned Nixon being vice president, was 1952. The comic? THE AVENGERS #60, January, 1969. Another recent episode had Klinger mentioning a see-through blouse, another recent innovation... Agatha Christie, author of at least 84 books and creator of detectives Hercule Poirot and Jane Marple, among others, died January 12 at the age of 85... Never say die Dept.: Tom Laughlin is preparing a film entitled "Billy Jack Goes To Washington"... Wolper Productions is working (still?) with Ray Bradbury on a series to be based on THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES, written over 25 years ago... Wolper is also attempting a new, Americanized version of THAT WAS THE WEEK THAT WAS (TW3)... Adam West, who has said frequently that BATMAN ruined his career, is out ruining it in public. He appeared in costume as the Caped Crusader with The Batmobile at an auto show in Milwaukee this month. With Robin going around to shopping centers and Batman appearing in public showings of his car, it's hard to determine how either strikes terror into the hearts of criminals... The second MONTY PYTHON Special aired on ABC, December 19, despite the efforts of the group to prevent

it. The judge ruled in their favor, but said that ABC would lose too much money in local listings and commercial sales problems. The special (who is Michael Ellis?) was made up of three regular 1974 episodes of the show, as was the first. Editing them for commercials and chopping out the juicy parts really did mess it up, and I hope that ABC's purchase of those six episodes did not preclude their showing on PBS. Has anyone seen any of the episodes in question? I have only seen episodes from the first two seasons ('69 - '72, I believe). And also, can someone also tell me whether John Cleese's absence on the special was due to illness or did he stop performing? Or was he just edited out? He was in the Holy Grail film, made after the last new episodes... Speaking of John Cleese, whilst thumbing through Harvey Kurtzman's HELP! Magazine #24, May of 65, I chanced upon "Christopher's Punctured Romance" -- a photo-comic starring John Cleese, a man in love with his daughter's Barbi doll. How about that?... My schedule for TV last issue neglected to indicate that Cher's show would henceforth be called the SONNY & CHER Show. It wasn't that I didn't know about it; I simply couldn't believe that Cher would again subordinate herself in the title credits... Finally, through sources, I have come to learn that someone named Duffy Vohland does not believe that I exist. I can only say that, since I do not know what a Duffy Vohland is, it is obvious that there is a concerted effort afoot to discredit me. It won't work. I will not be intimidated. I am -- Rona Blabbit

A Letter from the Editors

The Postal Service got their day in court (much more quickly than anybody else) and postage is now 13¢ for a first class ounce. We're not raising the price yet, but we probably will announce new rates next month, so, if you wanna save some bread, resubscribe now even if your sub runs out in 1984. You'll save, and we'll get a lot more money than usual in the next four weeks. Okay with you?

Jerry and Mike

SPECIAL LETTER OF INTEREST

Dear TCR:

You are, presumably, familiar with my scripts for Warren, plus a few for Skywald, Charlton, ORB and Red Circle. The enclosed clipping should be of interest to you for your news section. It appeared in THE PORT HURON TIMES HERALD, Port Huron, MI, December 4. The incident occured the day before, about 10 P.M. I am recovering, but my ability to see and to walk has been affected. I have moved, as might seem the clever thing. I never thought I'd be sending you news like this. T. Casey Brennan

** We never thought we'd be receiving it, Casey. We hope you recover soon. Below is the real-life horror-story:

(You can write to T. Casey Brennan and tell him to get well. His address is 1811 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.)

Man and son tortured with fire by 2 bandits who steal $1,400

BY JOHN F. BROWN
Times Herald Reporter

An Avoca man and his son, who were beaten and robbed of more than $1,400 then bound and gagged and set on fire were left to die in a flame-filled bathroom of their old farmhouse about midnight Wednesday.

William J. Brennan, 72, of 4238 Bricker Road, and his son, Terrance Casey Brennan, 27, bound together with a pair of police handcuffs, electrical cord and tape, managed to free themselves to telephone a Michigan Bell operator for help.

Sheriff Norman D. Meharg said Brennan and his son were admitted to Yale Hospital for treatment of second- and third-degree burns of their hands and arms and head and facial injuries.

Young Brennan had been stabbed in the head several times by his attackers.

Both men are reported in fair condition today at the hospital.

Meharg said there have been no arrests made and so far there are no suspects. He has assigned Detectives Robert V. Quain and Donald E. Tuthill to the case.

Meharg said the torture bandits were both white, armed with hand guns and had dark ski masks over their faces when they forced their way into the Brennan home about 10 p.m.

"One of the thieves knocked on the door and when Mr. Brennan answered he told Brennan he had run out of gasoline, then pulled the ski hat over his face, pointed a gun at Brennan and pushed his way into the house," Meharg said.

"The bandits used a pair of handcuffs to lock the men together. They set paper on fire and held it under the hands of the two men. Their hands were baked," Meharg said.

Deputy Sheriffs James VanConant and Orrin Burgett arrived at the scene less than six minutes after the operator called the Sheriff's Department.

"You could smell burning flesh when you entered the house," VanConant said.

Brennan and his son told the officers their attackers pushed them into the bathroom of the six-room farmhouse after they had taken the money.

They said sheets and bedding were put around them on the floor and then the men poured some type of flammable liquid over them.

One of the men tossed a lighted match into the sheets, closed the bathroom door and ran from the home.

Brennan said he and his son managed to get the rope and cord off their feet and stamped out the fire with their feet and hands, which were free of the handcuffs. They forced open the door and stumbled to the telephone.

"My dad thought it was a joke at first. He even tried to brush the gun aside from the man at the door, but I told him not to," Casey said.

Every room in the house, except the kitchen, was ransacked as the robbers searched the house for money.

Neighbors of the Brennan's heard nothing, deputies said.

However, VanConant and Burgett said there were footsteps leading from the Brennan home through freshly fallen snow for about a block to an area where a car had been parked.

The Brennans were described by their neighbors as quiet people who "bothered no one."

Neighbors said the Brennans had few visitors.

Brennan's wife, Mrs. Alice Brennan, was killed in a car accident two years ago in Ohio.

Comment

Last month s column has elicited a lot of response, mostly from readers who were glad to finally find out how to pronounce a few names. Unfortunately, they were not all the CORRECT pronunciation. First off, I received a letter from Doug Moench in which he was figuratively tearing out hair over our published version of his name. Being German myself and having taken four years of it in school, I was aware that the 'oe" in Moench was originally an "o umlaut' before being transferred to the U.S.'s spelling. Therefore, I had pronounced Moench "Mench" until I came into others I thought should know better than me. Moench does not rhyme with bunch! It rhymes with Bench! Okay Doug?

Doug also mentioned two other mispronunciations: Don Glut, which I said rhymes with but, actually is pronounced Gloot" and it rhymes with flute (again, that's how I pronounced it until I became "educated"); and Paul GULACY is pronounced 'Guh LAY see, not whatever I said. Also, Barry Short of San Dimas, CA mentioned that Vaughn Bode was pronounced "BO dee" by Vince Bode, his brother and co-possessor of the name. He also corrected my grade school Spanish pronunciation of Luis Dominguez's first name; it is "LOO eese" -- not ' LOO ee ' which is probably French. I don't really see how that one happened.

Barry also thought that their was enough confusion over Mark Evanier's name to mention that it is pronounced Eh vun EAR" and not ' EE vahn yay," as the French would. (Just as Pat Boyette is pronounced "BOY ette" and not 'BOY yay.")

I would also like to belatedly say ' Many thanks" to Alex Toth for the kind letter of comment concerning my first column here of a few months ago concerning adaptations. It really makes me feel good that he would take the time out to comment on my contribution. (Had we had a Letters page when we got it, it surely would have been published.)

* * * * *

Whenever I see someone say, in print or aloud, that fans are not a real force in the world of comics, it raises the hackles on my comics fan-neck. The statement is simply patently ridiculous. I can honestly state that comic books would not look as they do today had not a fan collective exercised their option as reader and made their feelings known.

It always seems that I go back to the earliest days of the comics to reinforce my viewpoints, but I think it's valid. Back to the earliest days of CAPTAIN AMERICA, FLASH and ALL STAR COMICS, the editors called for the opinion of the readership. I maintain that if a comic reader takes that step and actually writes the company about their comics, he instantly becomes a part of fandom. He does not, for example, have to attend a convention. He does not have to subscribe to a fanzine. He does not have to even go to a comic book back issue shop. A fan can be a fan and be totally isolated from his fellow fans. He does not have to write a letter either to make his views known.

I began collecting as a young boy, and the closest I ever got to fandom was to trade a few comics with neighborhood acquaintances. Yet, I was a FAN; I collected them, read them, loved them. I bought what I liked; didn t buy what I did not like, and THEREFORE, expressed my preferences. Alone, I could not make or break a comic. But there were a hundred thousand kids at the same time who did exactly what I did. Never got into organized fandom, yet had as much power on sales as anybody else, including the Big Name Fan who visited DC and Marvel offices every week.

Which is not to say that those in organized fandom did not produce effects of a different sort on the comics industry. Obviously, had it not been for early fandom efforts like the Alley Awards and organized fanzines like TCR, ON THE DRAWING BOARD, etc., Carmine Infantino, Stan Lee, Gardner Fox, Jack Kirby, et al would never have had their names plastered on their work to the degree they had. Not until fandom existed as a recognizable force did the current "star system of identifying, and hence, giving personal recognition to all of the many varied talents in comic books become a regular feature. That credit system is evidently, judging by the number of professional people who show up at conclaves and conventions, not disdained by those who have been applauded and hounded for autographs. Certain of the people working in comics today may have left long ago had it not been for the enthusiasm generated for their work by fans.

Marvel especially has exploited the comics as show biz, entitling their employees with alliterative adjectives and delineating their movements from comic to comic. Currently, each of the two majors have taken to the idea of selling a fan magazine to fans. If fandom is, indeed, such an insignificant force, why the attention? Why the letter columns? Why the featuring of fan favorites in many comics where sales has not really warranted it?

I maintain that estimates of fandom, at its most exclusive coteries -- the cons, fanzine sales, etc. -- are vastly and terribly low. 20,000 people who have enough interest in comics to do one of the aforementioned things doesn t seem like enough of a sales-potential force to deal with, but I believe that these 20,000 represent a fifth of the entire fan-force. This would not include, I would say, the casual buyer, the people who have parents that use comics as baby-sitters or somesuch. I believe that there are, at least, a hundred thousand of us out there, comics fans who follow from issue to issue any number of different titles. How else could sales on titles like WARLOCK or DR. STRANGE, intensely plotted and quite

confusing if read indiscriminately, sell well enough to continue? And why else would certain titles sell almost twice other titles UNLESS there were that many more hard-core purchasers of the title? I don t buy the print-run idea; at the many many newsstands and comics racks I've seen, SPIDER-MAN and SUPERMAN had the same amount of copies in the rack as all the other titles. If comics fans were nomadic, random purchasers we seem to be told they are, the comics would all sell pretty much the same.

I maintain that the comic fan is a major part of the purchasing force and that the fan is the one who tips the balance for about 60% of all the comic titles being published. The chief thing to consider, however, is that there is no common consensus of opinion among this group. The only thing that they probably have in common is that they like super-heroes, and that isn t even a hard and fast requirement. This much is certain: fandom doesn't have a collective sense of taste; they don't really know a good story from a bad one. What they do respond to is the character, his appearance and what he does.

Hence, what you have are 100,000 regular readers who will respond to the treatment of the character by either buying or not buying the next issue. If the character has a crummy costume, if he acts illogically or out of continuity, or is weak in other ways, these people, more than casual readers, will respond. This goes for the less charismatic books like the mystery and war titles too. When ECs were at their height, they delivered something that was expected by the readers, and when the line was cleaned up by the code, sales dropped. Fans obviously missed something; the casual reader wouldn t have known the difference.

What this all boils down to is that the silent majority (great term, eh?) of fandom is being REPRESENTED by the vocal minority. Organized or unorganized, the fan voice that Marvel and DC hear through their mail and their conventions, should be accepted as being a suitable crossview of all of fandom. We who are in the vocal part of fandom should not be deemed responsible for creating "monsters" by calling for revivals of long-dead fandom favorites and then watching them fail. By now, the publishers should have learned what is and what isn't a good book idea to gamble on. If these books fail, it is only because that book has been gauged for the vocal part of fandom, ignoring what it is that makes the successful books appealing -- character. When a book gets too far from the flashy hero in action; when the hero's powers and abilities are ill-defined or little used; or when an artist who is unsuited to super-hero strips is assigned, the approval of the majority is sacrificed for the praise of the minority. Those who write are, probably, those who can write; they're older and more educated and usually are happiest when comics are turned into a literary medium. Experience has indicated that this is the wrong approach for a salable comic, and that the best comics are compromises -- good plotting, succinct and non-wordy dialogue and a colorful lead character with a lot of whatever he does. Something that will appeal to 90,000 of those regular buyers and 15,000 of the 20,000 'fans.'

* * * * *

Whether HOWARD THE DUCK #1 was actually hijacked from the printer or whether some enterprising dealer bought out the print run before it could be distributed makes no real difference to me. What does make a difference, and what should make a difference to Marvel, is that I, along with a hundred thousand other 'fans' (see above), have missed the first issue of one of their experiments. Marvels possess continuity that make reading nearly every issue imperative. Having missed the first, some of those people may not feel inclined to pick up the second. What is more likely, though, is that these people will pick up the second and find out that they cannot get the first at anything less than $1.00 -- and will be steamed. Most of that anger will be directed at Marvel.

Steranko's MEDIASCENE intimated that HOWARD THE DUCK #1 went back to press to print up more copies. A lot of you who have already gotten a copy through comic dealers who receive their copies directly from the printer, may not care. But those of us who depend on the newsstand for our comics should call on Marvel to reprint and distribute copies of HTD #1 if they haven't already. The idea of someone trying to corner the market on anything is repugnant, and Marvel should try their best to circumvent this if they can.

-Andy Hildebrand

TCR Mailboat

Dear Mike and Jerry:

I had to write you about Charlton's use of the UPC symbol, which you questioned on page 10 of TCR #126. They are using a "test pattern" symbol, as evidenced by the consecutive numbers from 0 to 9. Evidently they either haven't applied for, or as yet received their company symbol number, which would be the first five digits. My company's is 29000. The 0 to the left indicates that the product is in the food industry, which I guess takes in everything, including comic books, that is sold in a food outlet. The last five digits should define the particular product, in Charlton's case, the title of the magazine. I noticed that on PHANTOM #67, the same UPC symbol is used, but there is above it a rectangular strip that contains the number 00713, which I suspect is a legitimate reference to the title, by UPC formulation. ((All comics have had these five digit serial numbers for each title since at least 1971. MT))

On the other hand, NPP has begun to use an honest to goodness primary symbol, along with the secondary one, although both are not 100% magnification (gets technical, doesn't it?). For example, FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL #12 indicates that NPP has been assigned the

(Continued on page 18)

ST Pocket Checklist

February 1976

Marvel

- ☐ AMAZING ADVENTURES #36
- ☐ THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #156
- ☐ ASTONISHING TALES #35
- ☐ THE AVENGERS #147
- ☐ CAPTAIN AMERICA #197
- ☐ CAPTAIN MARVEL #44
- ☐ CHAMBER OF CHILLS #22
- ■ CONAN THE BARBARIAN #62
- ☐ CRAZY #17
- ☐ DAREDEVIL #133
- ☐ DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #22
- ☐ THE DEFENDERS #35
- ■ DOCTOR STRANGE #14
- ☐ FANTASTIC FOUR #170
- ■ HOWARD THE DUCK #3
- ☐ THE INCREDIBLE HULK #199
- ☐ THE INVADERS #6
- ☐ IRON MAN #86
- ☐ JUNGLE ACTION #21
- ☐ KID COLT OUTLAW #206
- ■ MARVEL FEATURE #4
- ☐ MARVEL SUPER-HEROES #57
- ☐ MARVEL TALES #67
- ☐ MARVEL TEAM-UP #45
- ☐ MARVEL TRIPLE ACTION #29
- ☐ MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #16
- ☐ MARVEL'S GREATEST COMICS #63
- ☐ MASTER OF KUNG FU #40
- ■ OMEGA THE UNKNOWN #2
- ☐ PLANET OF THE APES #19
- ☐ POWER MAN #31
- ☐ RAWHIDE KID #133
- ☐ RINGO KID #27
- ■ THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #11
- ☐ SGT. FURY #133
- ■ SKULL THE SLAYER #5
- ☐ STRANGE TALES #185
- ☐ THOR #247
- ☐ TOMB OF DARKNESS #20
- ☐ TOMB OF DRACULA #44
- ☐ WEREWOLF BY NIGHT #38

Gold Key

- ☐ BORIS KARLOFF TALES OF MYSTERY #67
- ☐ BUGS BUNNY #171
- ☐ DAFFY DUCK #100
- ☐ DONALD DUCK #170
- ☐ FAT ALBERT #12
- ☐ GOLD KEY SPOTLIGHT #1
- ☐ LITTLE MONSTERS #33
- ☐ LOONEY TUNES #7
- ☐ MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER #43
- ☐ MICKEY MOUSE #162
- ☐ NEW TERRYTOONS #37
- ☐ THE OCCULT FILES OF DR. SPEKTOR #19
- ☐ THE PINK PANTER #33
- ☐ PORKY PIG #66
- ☐ RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT! #61
- ☐ TRAGG AND THE SKY-GODS #5
- ☐ TWEETY AND SYLVESTER #56
- ☐ UFO FLYING SAUCERS #10
- ☐ UNCLE SCROOGE #127
- ☐ UNDERDOG #6
- ☐ WALT DISNEY SHOWCASE #34
- ☐ WALT DISNEY'S COMICS AND STORIES #427
- ☐ YOSEMITE SAM AND BUGS BUNNY #35

National

- ■ ACTION COMICS #459
- ■ ADVENTURE COMICS #445
- ■ ALL STAR COMICS #60
- ■ BATMAN #275
- ■ THE BATMAN FAMILY #5
- ■ BLACKHAWK #246
- ■ BLITZKRIEG #3
- ■ CLAW THE UNCONQUERED #7
- ■ DC SUPER STARS #3
- ■ DETECTIVE COMICS #459
- ■ FLASH #241
- ■ FOUR STAR SPECTACULAR #2
- ■ THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS #2
- ■ GHOSTS #47
- ☐ G.I. COMBAT #190
- ■ HOUSE OF MYSTERY #241
- ■ THE JOKER #7
- ■ JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #130
- ■ KAMANDI #41
- ■ KARATE KID #2
- ☐ OUR ARMY AT WAR #292
- ☐ OUR FIGHTING FORCES #167
- ■ PLOP! #21
- ■ RICHARD DRAGON, KUNG FU FIGHTER #8
- ■ SECRET SOCIETY OF SUPER-VILLAINS #1
- ■ STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES #199
- ■ SUPERMAN #299
- ■ TARZAN #249
- ■ THE TARZAN FAMILY #63
- ■ THE UNEXPECTED #173
- ■ WEIRD WAR TALES #46
- ■ WEIRD WESTERN TALES #34

Warren

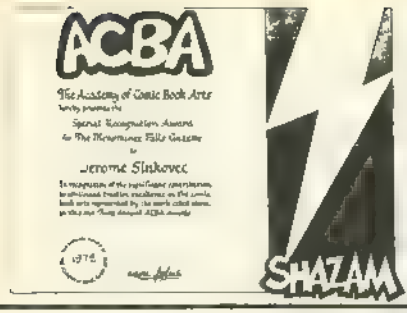
- ■ EERIE #73
- ☐ FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND #124
- ■ THE SPIRIT #13
- ■ VAMPIRELLA #50

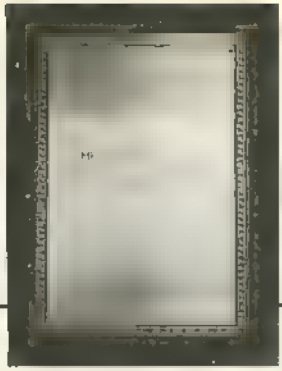
National Lampoon

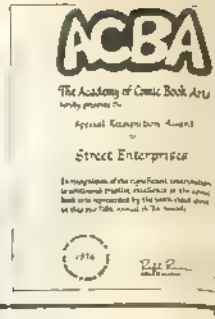
- ☐ NATIONAL LAMPOON #72 (Lion)

Charlton

- ☐ BEETLE BAILEY #116
- ☐ BLONDIE #219
- ☐ DINO #16
- ☐ DOOMSDAY + 1 #6
- ☐ FIGHTIN' ARMY #124
- ☐ FIGHTIN' MARINES #129
- ☐ GHOST MANOR #29
- ☐ GHOSTLY TALES #121
- ☐ THE GREAT GAZOO #16
- ☐ HAUNTED #27
- ☐ HONG KONG PHOOEY #6
- ☐ KORG: 70,000 B.C. #6
- ☐ MIDNIGHT TALES #18
- ☐ MY ONLY LOVE #6
- ☐ SECRET ROMANCES #38
- ☐ SECRETS OF YOUNG BRIDES #6
- ■ SPACE: 1999 #4
- ■ SPACE: 1999 Magazine #4
- ☐ SPEED BUGGY #6
- ☐ TEEN CONFESSIONS #94
- ☐ TIME FOR LOVE #47
- ☐ VENGEANCE SQUAD #6
- ☐ WAR #6
- ☐ WHEELIE AND THE CHOOPER BUNCH #6
- ☐ YANG #13







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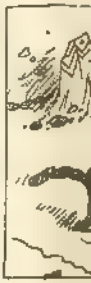
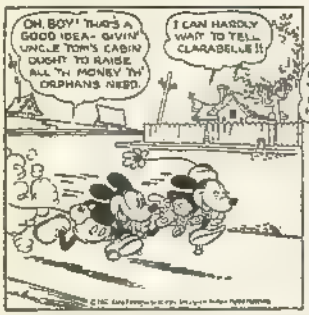
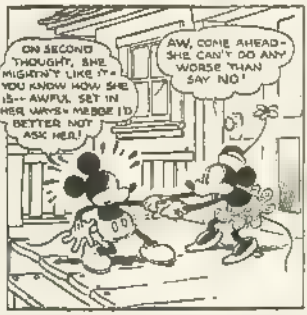
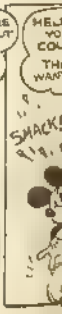


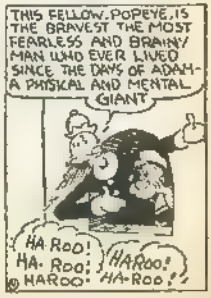

OH, BOY! THAT'S A GOOD IDEA- GIVIN' UNCLE TOM'S CABIN OUGHT TO RAISE ALL TH MONEY TH' ORPHANS NEED.
I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO TELL CLARABELLE!!


ON SECOND THOUGHT, SHE MIGHTN'T LIKE IT - YOU KNOW HOW SHE IS-- AWFUL SET IN HER WAYS- MEBBE I'D BETTER NOT ASK HER!
AW, COME AHEAD- SHE CAN'T DO ANY WORSE THAN SAY NO!

-- DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA? WE HAVE TO ASK YOU BUT GEE! TH ORPHANS DO NEED TH MONEY
WE KNOW YOU'RE AWFUL BUSY, BUT WOULD YOU HELP US CLARABELLE? HUH?



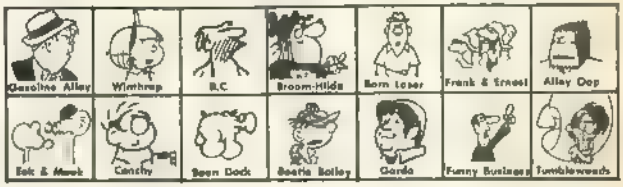
UNACCUSTOMED AS I AM TO MAKING SPEECHES— AHEM— ETC — THIS MAN STANDING BESIDE ME DEFEATED OUR ENEMY SINGLE HANDED—
HA-ROO
HA-ROO!


THIS FELLOW, POPEYE, IS THE BRAVEST THE MOST FEARLESS AND BRAINY MAN WHO EVER LIVED SINCE THE DAYS OF ADAM- A PHISKAL AND MENTAL GIANT
HA-ROO! HA-ROO! HAROO!
HAROO! HA-ROO!

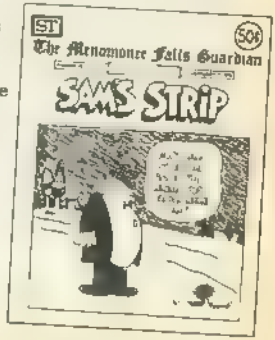
KRAZY KAT (1927) MICKEY MOUSE (1932) THIMBLE THEATR

Award Winning Entertainment!

The Best Humor Strips Are In The GUARDIAN!



Presenting for your giggling pleasure, The Menomonee Falls GUARDIAN, a weekly tabloid featuring a week's worth of all your favorite humor strips, past and present. From 1927 -- George Herriman's immortal KRAZY KAT! From 1931 -- probably the funniest and best humorous adventure strip, POPEYE by Elzie Segar! And, from 1932 -- Floyd Gottfredson's version of Disney's MICKEY MOUSE! Not to overlook today's best: Russell Myers' BROOM-HILDA, Dick Moores' GASOLINE ALLEY, Mort Walker's BEETLE BAILEY, Jim Childress' CONCHY, ALLEY OOP, B.C., FRANK & ERNEST, EEK AND MEEK, WINTHROP, TUMBLEWEEDS, GORDO, BORN LOSER, BOON DOCK and FUNNY BUSINESS. Plus, our newest addition -- Mort Walker and Jerry Dumas' hilarious 1961 send-up of comic strips, cartoonists and comic readers, SAM'S STRIP. Also featured is the only weekly comic strip coming out of Canada today, Arn Saba's NEIL THE HORSE, not to mention the semi-regular original strip of ridiculous robotics, ROAD RUNNERS. This fun-filled sixteen page package has been published weekly for more than two years, so why not get on the fun now?



GUARDIAN Rates:
Sample-50 cents; 12 weeks-$5
26 weeks-$10; 52 weeks-$19
Overseas and Canada: 12 weeks-$6
26 weeks-$12; 52 weeks-$23

street ST enterprises

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company I.D. number of 70989, and the title, mathematically, is 32413. The smaller section of bars bears a number of 03, which identifies it as issue 12 of the title.

In summary, Charlton is "foisting" the UPC people, NPP is playing it as it should be. If the day ever comes when all supermarkets and such public sales outlets are equipped with UPC scanners and computers, which I doubt, then Charlton's magazines will either short circuit or not register via the computer readout. The whole bit is highly uninteresting to the ordinary reader, but since you gave the fashlunginer thing some "ink," I had to answer your query.
Howard P. Siegel, 95 Sedgwick Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10705

**No, actually, I'm quite interested. (Heck, you're talking about somebody who tried to figure out the inventory numbers on the DCs and all those serial numbers on all the titles.) Something Howard didn't mention was that the price is not ON the UPC symbol; it's in the computer memory banks, which matches it with the title and product code. Unless the computer is also coded to tell the price difference between separate issues, it is possible that the price could be raised in the computer and 25¢ comics could register as 30¢. Hopefully, that's been covered. MT

Manfred "Red" Clothbright, 644 E. Chambers Ave., Kearney, NB 68847: Being a longtime GAZETTE and GUARDIAN subscriber, I know who you are. But who is this Andy Hildebrand and why are his comments featured in your magazine?

**Andy is a friend of mine that I went to school with who happens to share a great number of my views on comics and the industry in general. I felt that I had a conflict in reporting AND commenting, so I asked Andy to do it. It's his first published work in fanzines, and many people seem to like it. (One thing I am a bit perturbed about is the fact that he spends hours at my house, reading MY comics. His research is from MY library.) MT

Joel West, Houston TX: ...When will DC try to lose the "hard core kids idol" image again and revert to their above par human interest stories? When will they clean out their top "funny book narrators" for some serious scripters?

My suggestion for a future poll, which would draw enormous responses, I believe, would be to question your readers as to which strip they'd most like to see revived. On your first question, many even read this into it, though it was quite amply expressed.

**I don't think DC wants to lose the kids. I do think they don't have to be written down to, though, if that's what you mean. By the way, I don't think the human interest stories were that successful, quality or sales-wise.

As for the poll, okay. We haven't had a question yet that people could vote one way or the other, and I figure that with nearly everybody's favorite having been revived in the past couple of years there could only be a couple of real votegetters. So, what character would YOU like to see in a regular feature?

Gene Kehoe, Waterloo, IA 50701: I feel you were overly critical of Warren Storob in your Media News column. He's obviously genuinely interested in comics as an art form and not as a financial investment, as in Mitch Mehdy's case. Plus, he forced Julius Schwartz into making some very revealing comments that had to make DC fans flinch. Julie claims that their readers only want to be entertained in the most superficial way by comics. Julie's (and DC's) position seems to be effectively summed up by this slogan: "No depth or relevance desired... just five minutes on the toilet required." It's much easier for DC to make this claim than to admit that they just don't have the talent to compete with Marvel on a quality basis. Besides, they know that diehard fans and little kids will buy their comics no matter what. By the way, I had never heard of Mr. Storob either.

**Somehow I doubt that Julie was forced into revealing anything he would not otherwise have stated had someone asked him. What it really is all about is whether you would rather read about a hero fighting a villain who's robbing a bank or one who's destroying the environment. That's about the degree of relevance we're talking about. The only other large difference between the two companies is that Marvel characters tend to have a lot more thought balloons...

Barry Short, 420 W 4th Street, San Dimas, CA 91773: I have a couple of minor complaints I want to do away with early in this letter, so here goes: 1) The December and January issues have arrived fairly late, #126, for instance, did not arrive until January 3, where only a few months ago, TCR was arriving about the 20th of the month preceding the cover date. The problem here is that very often several comics have been released before TCR has reported them as coming, and this is rather bothersome. 2) Would it be possible for you to get about two weeks further ahead on coming comics, in particular Marvel Comics? The reason is that as of today, January 5, I have all the Marvels listed as coming out through the 20th. It is not inconceivable at this point that I will complete all January-scheduled release Marvels by the 9th. Keep in mind that this is standard situation all over southern California, so you might see what you can do about advancing the schedule. DCs are rarely more than a week early, and Charltons often a week late, so Marvel is the only critical point.

On the other hand, there are a lot of good things to be said for TCR as you're doing it. I really appreciate your expanded coverage, particularly with regard to Continuity Associates and the Byron Preiss publications. And, I enjoy Andy Hildebrand's column; he has some very good insights, and, like myself, seems to have a desire to see a little more order in fandom.

**Andy thanks you, David Finger thanks you, I thank you. As for your complaints -- well, they're entirely valid. #126 was mailed about two weeks after it was printed because of the holidays and other reasons so silly to mention. This issue should, conceivably, be in your

hands around the 20th. That should give you the two week advance on the Marvels you ask for. Beyond that, I don't think we can help because most Marvels aren't even finished early enough to get them into the issue. We could list them, but not the contents. The release dates are Marvel's, not ours, and around here, they're correct or too early. What can we do? MT

Barry Miller, 194 Royal Road, Brockton, MA 02402: Since I subscribe to ten DC books a month, most of the DCs I buy have already been bought for 25¢ each. But at least (and this is a news item you have not printed), DC now sends out their books mailed flat!! I guess that is about all we can expect for an extra nickel.

Charlton's page count is 23 pages per issue yet they charge the same price -- 25¢ or 30¢ -- as Marvel and DC, who have only 17 or 18 pages of art. I hope you can find out why.

**The reason I didn t mention that DC's mailing their comics flat is because it seems to be a completely indiscriminate policy. Some of mine come flat, some folded. The worst thing is that every one that I've gotten flat so far has been stuck to the envelope, leaving a nice mark on the cover.

Charlton undoubtedly has lower costs as they own their own printing plant. They probably have lower salaries also. MT

And lastly, this issue's Lester Boutillier, 2726 Castiglione Street, New Orleans, LA 70119: Does Mike Esposito pronounce his name? Does he pronounce it the Italian way (Es POS i to) or the Anglicanized way (Es pos EE to)?

I hear a rumor that Marvel's near bankruptcy, that Cadence is thinking of selling it, and that Warner is thinking of buying it, should it go up for sale. Any DC-Marvel merger would probably be opposed by the Fed, but if such a thing should go through the effects would be enormous.

**You can say that again. I doubt the whole thing, frankly. Still, Warner does own the largest record company conglomerate (Warner Bros., Atlantic, Atco, Elektra, Asylum, Capricorn, and other subsidiaries), so...

By the way, how do you pronounce Boutillier? I've heard the latter version of Esposito's name most often. MT

The Writer's Side

Q: Based on what's happened in the past few years, what do you see as the future of comics?

JOHN DAVID WARNER: That's a hard question to answer. There is such a state of fluctuation now between sales (which have shown some good signs on the color line) and rising prices (which is bound to destroy any uptrend we've seen recently) and all the general changes, searching for variations on a package. It's hard to say. I think most people are playing it by ear now, and if anyone has any long-range forecasts, it's beyond me.

ARCHIE GOODWIN: I feel what the next five years will bring is more of the same. I think what's currently the 50¢ size may eventually become the standard comic and then they'll all eventually begin raising the price and trimming the pages in that. It's possible that as comics reach 30¢, new trends (black and white books, treasury editions) might catch on more. As prices get higher and sales become iffy things, I look toward a trend of using more pre-sold property (adaptations and the like) with a built-in audience.

ROGER SLIFER: Unless there's a drastic change in format within the next two years, there will be no comics in five. Both writers and readers have been hurt by the cutback in pages. Only by enlarging the amount of story material (even if it means larger-sized, higher priced books) will we able to present the readership with the type of material the creators enjoy creating and the buying public will enjoy buying.

MARTIN PASKO: New packages. I think the publishers will continue to experiment with new packages, different sizes, with different prices and more material. And if that doesn't work, comics as we know them will eventually die. The conglomerates that owns the companies will close the companies, continuing to make money off the characters through licensing. I think that'll happen in five years, ten at the most.

DENNY O'NEIL: I don't see any huge difference in the future. I see the SUPERMAN-SPIDER-MAN book as a portent of things to come. There will be less cut-throat competition and more work, to keep the medium alive.

CHRIS CLAREMONT: We're going out of business. I don't know. Probably doing more of the same. I echo Roger Slifer. Based on what's happened in the past five years, you could conceivably be paying 50¢ for 17 pages of art by the end of the decade. If we don't do something soon, we'll price ourselves out of the market. There's a limit to gouging people. It's hurting us, it's hurting them.

SCOTT EDELMAN: The main difference, as I see it, will not be in the product, but in the producers. I think that the results of the Siegel and Shuster case will affect people's approach toward their work. Even if it sets no legal precedent, it does set a moral one. People will think more closely before giving away the rights to their character. As an example, if Don Pendleton had done The Executioner in a comic book way, God knows what the result of the legal battles would be. But he does own the right to his character, having done it in paperback. Agatha Christie makes (made) $10,000 a week in royalties alone. So why create a character for comics when all you get is a tossed bone?

ROY THOMAS : I'll be happy to see them survive. I don't think I could comment on anything else in such a short space. What I still feel needs to be done is abandon the 32 page books for a new, better package. We need to solve the distribution problem.

(This column was conducted by David Finger.)

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DEPT OF DIVERGENT OPINION

Marvel Coming Comics

DAREDEVIL (133, May). Uri Geller, noted mentalist, teams up with DD to hunt down a group of ESPers in 'Introducing Mind Wave And His Fearsome Think Tank' by Marv Wolfman, Bob Brown and Jim Mooney. (2/3)

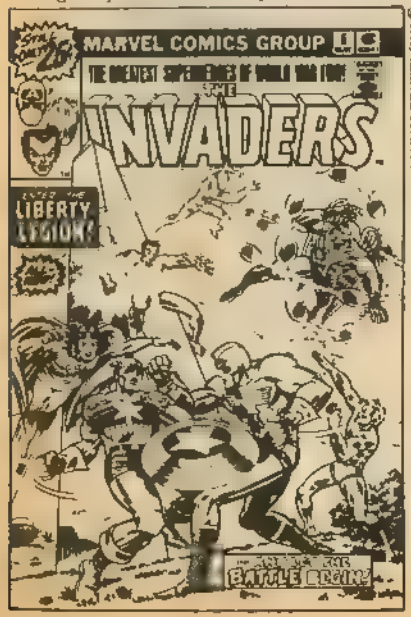
MARVEL'S GREATEST COMICS (63, May). Direct from a thrilling engagement in FF #81 are the FF in "Enter -- The Exquisite Elemental" idiomatized by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott. Cover is by Kirby. (2/3)

THE INVADERS (6, May). Concluding the continuity from last month's MARVEL PREMIERE, the Liberty Legion battles The Invaders to save American landmarks in "And Let The Battle Begin" by Roy Thomas, Frank Robbins and Vince Colletta. Cover is by Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott. (2/3)

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE (16, May). The Thing and Morbius unite to combat "The Return of The Living Eraser," a villain who menaces the Earth in this tale by Bill Mantlo, Arvell Jones and Dick Giordano (with the Crusty Bunkers). (2/3)

SKULL THE SLAYER (5, May). King Arthur's knights fight Morgan LeFay's demons, not to mention the surprising reappearance of the deceased, plus Jeff and Ann Cory's plan to murder Skull, all in "Magic, Myth and Madness" by Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema and Sonny Trinidad. (2/3)

TOMB OF DRACULA (44, May). Dr. Strange meets Drac in the first part of this startling crossover which begins with Wong being bitten by the Nocturnal Nipper and Strange setting out to gain retribution in 'His Name Is Dr. Strange" by Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan and Tom Palmer. Continued in DR. STRANGE #14. Cover is by Colan and Palmer. (2/3)



TOMB OF DARKNESS (20, May). (2/3)

KID COLT OUTLAW (206, May). (2/3)

THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU (22, March). Iron Fist stars in 'To Storm The Walls Of Hell" by Chris Claremont and Rudy Nebres, and The White Tiger is featured in 'Who Is The White Tiger?" by Bill Mantlo, Keith Giffen and Rico Rival. (2/3)

THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN (11, April). "The Abode Of The Damned" is based upon a Robert E. Howard story about Francis X. Gordon that Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Yong Montano adapted into the Conan canon. It concerns Conan amongst thieves in a mountain city. Also included are reviews of the CONAN paperbacks and the CONAN LP. The cover is by Ken Barr. (2/3)

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (156, May). Ned Leeds and Betty Brant finally tie the knot but reckon without the intervention of a new super-villain called The Mirage in "On A Clear Day You Can See The Mirage" by Len Wein, Ross Andru and Mike Esposito. The cover is by John Romita. (2/10)

CAPTAIN AMERICA (197, May). Argyle Fist takes over the underground fortress of the elite and Cheer Chadwick makes a surprise getaway as ' The Rocks Are Burning" in the latest chapter by Jack Kirby and Frank Giacoia. Cover is by Kirby. (2/10)

THOR (247, May). Thor and Firelord fight side by side and Jane Foster shows some surprising courage in ' The Flame And The Hammer" by Len Wein, John Buscema and Joe Sinnott. (2/10)

MASTER OF KUNG FU (40, May). A supporting character is introduced as Shang Chi turns in his resignation to Sir Denis Nayland Smith in "The Murder Agency" by Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy. (2/10)

MARVEL SUPER-HEROES (57, May). Well, we messed up last time, as HULK #102 was reprinted. This issue features #103 a "And Now, The Space Parasite" by Gary Friedrich, Marie Severin and Frank Giacoia. Cover is by Severin. (2/10)

MARVEL TRIPLE ACTION (29, May). From AVENGERS #37, To Conquer A Colossus" is reprinted. It was by Roy Thomas, and Don Heck. Gil Kane did the cover. (2/10)

MARVEL FEATURE (4, May). Red Sonja battles the Hyborian equivalent of the Gorgon monster in "Eyes Of The Gorgon" by Bruce Jones and Frank Thorne. The cover is that special one mentioned in the news section and is by Frank Thorne. (2/10)

CHAMBER OF CHILLS (22, May). (2/10)

ASTONISHING TALES (35, May). Deathlok and Ryker stage their final confrontation with a computer in And Once Removed From Never by Bill Mantlo, Rich Buckler and Klaus Janson. (2/10)

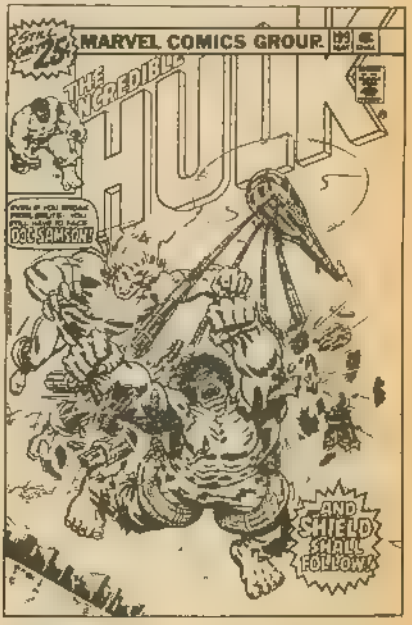
STRANGE TALES (185, May). We've been getting these wrong too. This should be the Dr. Strange tales from ST #134-35, "Earth Be My Battleground" and "Eternity Beckons both of which were by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko. (2/10)

DOCTOR STRANGE (14, May). Continuing the Mage-Masticator crossover from TOMB OF DRACULA, Dr. Strange undergoes an unusual transformation (even for him) in "The Tomb Of Dr. Strange" by Steve Englehart, Gene Colan and Tom Palmer. The cover is by Colan and Palmer. (2/10)

PLANET OF THE APES (19, April). Jason and friends return in 'Demons Of The Psychedrome" by Doug Moench, Mike Ploog and Tom Sutton. Chapter 4 of CONQUEST is by Moench and Alfredo Alcala. Cover is by Bob Larkin. (2/10)

CRAZY (17, May). Last issue for Bob Foster's HISTORY OF MOOSEKIND. (2/10)

THE INCREDIBLE HULK (199, May). The Hulk is on the rampage in Citrusville! The Hulk vs. Doc Samson! Nick Fury and SHIELD enters the fray! And SHIELD Shall Follow" is by Len Wein! And Sal Buscema! And Joe Staton too! The cover is by Rich Buckler and John Romita! (2/17) (!!!)



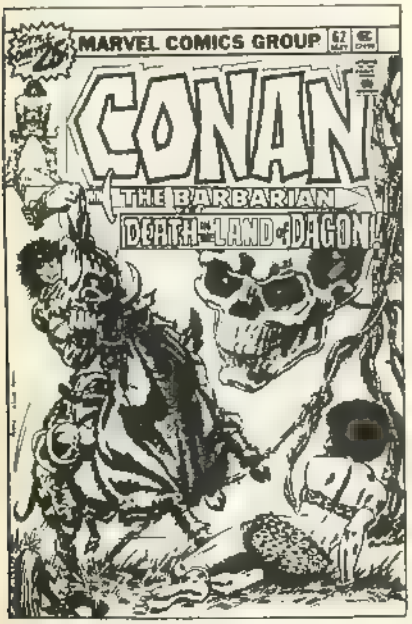
THE AVENGERS (147, May). By contrast, this issue only picks up where the story was two months ago (before the Assassin tale interrupted) as The Crown Of Lemuria surfaces in the hands of only The Squadron Supreme. So console yourself and be satisfied that it's only a "Crisis On Other Earth! Story by Steve Englehart, art by George Perez and Vince Colletta. Accept no substitutions. (2/17)

CONAN THE BARBARIAN (62, May). Conan continues his pursuit of Amra, whose origin is revealed in The Lord Of The Lion" by Roy Thomas, John Buscema and Steve Gan. The cover is by Gil Kane and John Romita. (2/17)

THE DEFENDERS (35, May). The gameshow of the issue is Musical Minds as Chondu undergoes a unique transformation and a new and improved Red Guardian makes his appearance. It's all in "Enter The Red Guardian" by Steve Gerber, Sal Buscema and Klaus Janson. (2/17)

MARVEL TALES (67, May). If calculations are correct, as they rarely are, this should be 'Beware The Black Widow" from SPIDEY #86 by Stan Lee, John Romita and Jim Mooney. Cover is by Romita. (2/17)

OMEGA THE UNKNOWN (2, May). James-Michael moves in with Ruth Harper and Omega takes on The Incredible Hulk in "Welcome To Ninth Avenue" by Steve Gerber and Mary Skrenes and Jim Mooney. The cover is by Rich Buckler and Al Milgrom. (2/17)



RAWHIDE KID (133, May). (2/17)

JUNGLE ACTION (21, May). The Klan saga continues in 'A Cross Burning Darkly, Blackening the Night' by Don McGregor, Billy Graham and Bob McLeod. (2/17)

POWER MAN (31, May). Luke Cage crushes Cockroach's shotgun and this part of PM's life is wrapped up in "Over The Years They Murder The Stars" by Don McGregor, Sal Buscema and Dick Giordano. (2/17)

FANTASTIC FOUR (170, May). Through no particular fault of his own, our ubiquitous reporter and East Coast editor, David Finger, was no where at all when it came to informing us as to the contents of this particular issue. We could make a guess as to what happens in this one... if we had the April issue, which we don't. You could too, so why don't you? Hey, let's all be surprised! Why this could be a revolutionary new way to do coming comic attractions -- everybody could guess what's coming up and have an enormous feeling of personal accomplishment if they were correct! Wow, we could even guess the title! Apologies to Roy Thomas, George Perez, Joe Sinnott, Marv Wolfman, David Finger, and whoever this issue's guest villain may be... (2/24)

MARVEL TEAM-UP (45, May). This one we know about. Somehow our Wondrous Wall Crawler finds himself in the year 2021, meets Killraven, fights the Martians and faces Future Shock as a result. Story is by Bill Mantlo, artwork is by Sal Buscema and Mike Esposito. The cover is by Gil Kane. (2/24)

IRON MAN (86, May). Iron Man is menaced by an opponent from his deepest past in "The Gentleman's Name Is Blizzard" by Bill Mantlo, George Tuska and Vince Colletta. The cover is by Ed Hannigan and Frank Giacoia. (2/24)

CAPTAIN MARVEL (44, May). Winding up Cap's battle with The Destroyer, and introducing a new team of automatons called The Nutrons, created to destroy all life, is Death Throws by Steve Englehart and Al Milgrom. The cover is by Milgrom. (2/24)

WEREWOLF BY NIGHT (38, May). Introducing Three-Who-Are-One, while Jack Russell discovers a new lease on life, is Re-Birth Also Kills by Doug Moench and Don Perlin. (2/24)

AMAZING ADVENTURES (36, May). Killraven on Mars! Return of the High Overlord! Tournament of Death! Our first glimpse of Deathraven! (Hold it! I did the exclamation mark joke already!!!) "Red Dust Legacy" is by Don McGregor, Craig Russell, Keith Giffen and Jack Abel. (Resisted the temptation to use an exclamation point there!) (2/24 -- 1)

THE RINGO KID (27, May). Cover is by Eli Katz -- er, Gil Kane. (2/24)

SGT. FURY (133, May). "Into The Jaws Of Death" by Roy Thomas, Dick Ayers and John Tartaglione is reprinted from SF #31. The cover is by Dick Ayers. (2/24)

HOWARD THE DUCK (3, May). See Howard as a matter of fact Master of Quack Fu in "Four Feathers Of Death" by Steve Gerber, John Buscema and Steve Leialoha. See if you can find this on your newsstand. Cover is by Rich Buckler and Leialoha. (2/24)

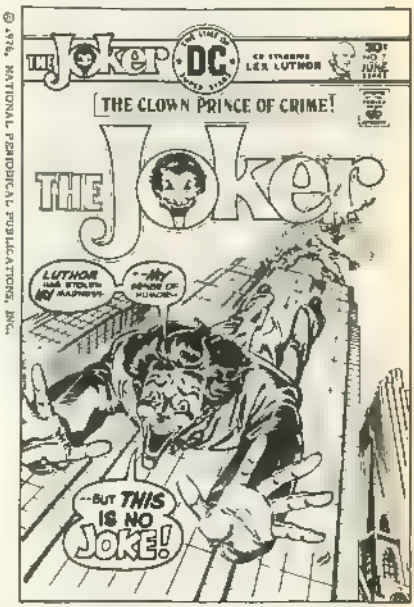
National Coming Comics

OUR ARMY AT WAR (292, May). This month's installment of the adventures of Sgt. Rock and Easy Co. involves a 'Lesson Of Blood" and is by Bob Kanigher, Joe Kubert and Frank Redondo. Also featured is another Gallery Of War featurette by Bob Kanigher and Ric Estrada. The cover is by Kubert. (2/3)

GHOSTS (47, May-June). The three stories in this issue are: "Wrath Of The Restless Specter" by E.R. Cruz, 'The Haunted Catacombs" and "The Swahili Talking Bones" by Franc Reyes. The cover is by Luis Dominguez. (2/3)

WEIRD WESTERN TALES (34, May-June). Jonah Hex must compete head-to-head with another bounty hunter of equal calibre in "The Death Of A Bounty Hunter' by Mike Fleisher and George Moliterni. The cover is by Luis Dominguez. (2/3)

THE JOKER (7, May-June). Through a laboratory fluke, The Joker's insanity and macabre sense of humor are transfered to Lex Luthor in "Luthor -- You re Driving Me



Sane!" by Elliot Maggin, Irv Novick and Frank McLaughlin. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/5)

KAMANDI (41, May). The first new-look Kamandi adventure has him moving west to Hollywood where he encounters coyotes who make animal movies starring humans in "Hollywood Hounds" by Gerry Conway, Chic Stone and Mike Royer. The cover is by Jose Garcia-Lopez. (2/5)

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA (130, May). Inconsistencies in past adventures necessitate another JLA Casebook story which reveals just how and why the satellite sanctuary was set up in "Skyjack At 23,300 Miles' by Marty Pasko, Dick Dillin and Frank McLaughlin. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/5)

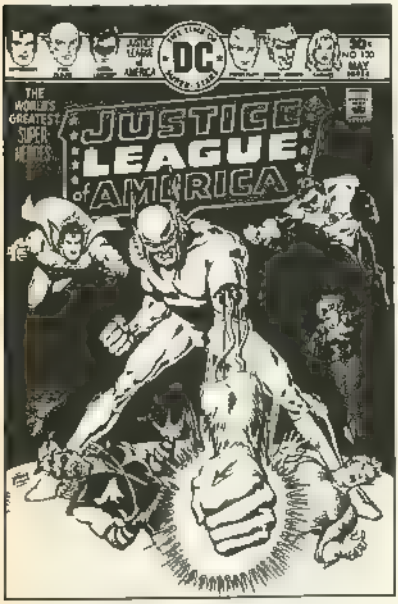
BATMAN FAMILY (5, May-June). Batgirl and Robin combine again to face Maze, an assassin who plans the death of "The Princess and the Vagabond" in this story by Elliot Maggin, Curt Swan and Vince Colletta. Reprints are "Ace The Bat Hound" -- the origin of that masked canine -- and "The Signs Of The Signalman," both drawn by the

Bob Kane-Sheldon Moldoff-Charles Paris team. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/5)

HOUSE OF MYSTERY (241, May). Now monthly again, the stories in this issue include "Paid In Full" by Jack Oleck and Frank Robbins, and Bill Finger's final story, "Death Pulls The Strings" by Nestor Redondo. The cover is by Ricardo Villagran. (2/10)

STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES (199, May). The French Underground, led by Mlle. Marie, sets out to execute the Unknown Soldier for treason in "The Crime Of Sgt. Schepke" by David Michelinie and Gerry Talaoc. Plus, a future war story, "The Killing Machine" by Michelinie, Steve Skeates and Tenny Henson. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/10)

FREEDOM FIGHTERS (2, May-June). The new team, already split by The Silver Ghost's transformation of Black Condor, Doll Man and Phantom Lady into silver statues, faces further peril as the villain threatens to do likewise to Uncle Sam, The Ray and Human Bomb in "Rampage" by Gerry Conway, Pablo Marcos and Tex Blaisdell. The cover is by Dick Giordano. (2/10)



BATMAN (275, May). The enthralling Underworld Olympics series will come to an end in this issue. The question is -- will Batman be able to figure out what's going on and bust the Crime Carnival before 'The Ferry Blows At Midnight?" David Reed, Ernie Chua and Tex Blaisdell know already. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/10)

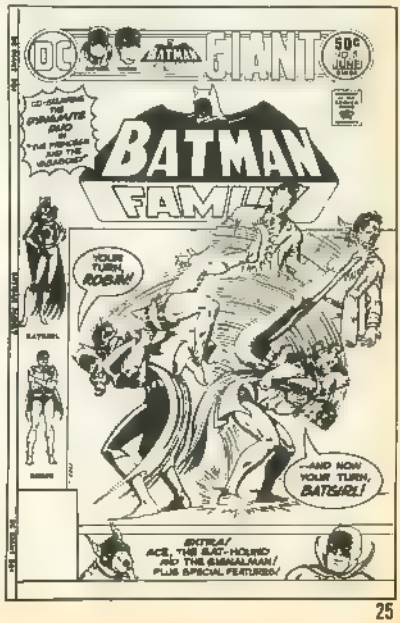
SUPERMAN (299, May). If you think Batman has problems, Clark Kent must decide what to do about his on-again, off-again super powers while battling Luthor, Mr. Mxyzptlk, The Prankster, Brainiac, Terra Man, The Parasite, Toyman, and others while trying to find Mr. XI Part four concludes the story with "The Double-Or-Nothing Life Of Superman" by Cary Bates, Elliot Maggin, Curt Swan and Bob Oksner. The cover is by Oksner. (2/12)

KARATE KID (2, May-June). Safely ensconsed in the present, Karate Kid thinks he only has to adjust to our culture's different life styles but he fails to reckon with an old GREEN LANTERN foe who trys to destroy the U.N. in "The International Dooms Of Major Disaster" by Barry Jameson, Ric Estrada and Joe Staton. The cover is by Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez and Mike Grell. (2/12)

PLOP! (21, May-June). The first giant-sized issue will include most of the stuff original meant for DC SUPER STARS #2, including "It Shouldn't Happen to A Dog" by David Reed and Sergio Aragones, "The Compulsion" by John Albano and a lot of one pagers and other things by Sergio Aragones. It's all new and the cover is by John Albano and Joe Orlando. (2/12)

FOUR STAR SPECTACULAR (2, May-June). Three stories featuring four heroes are included: Superboy in "The Secret Of Krypton's Scarlet Jungle" by George Papp, Wonder Woman in "The Gunslingers Of Space" by Bob Kanigher, Ross Andru and Mike Esposito, and Kid Flash and Elongated Man in "Kid Flash Meets Elongated Man" by John Broome, Carmine Infantino and Joe Giella. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/12)

DC SUPER STARS (3, May). SUPERBOY & THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES is what



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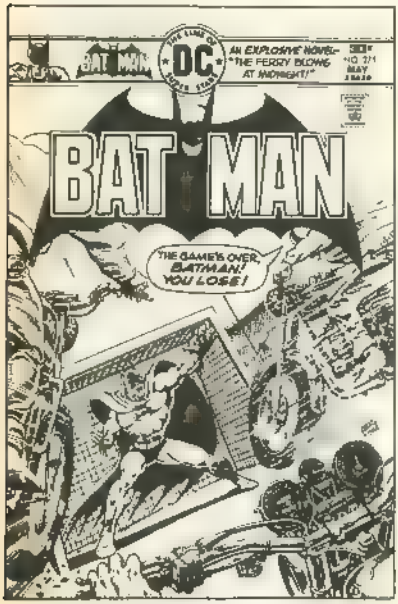
the cover says, but it's actually Superman and the adult Legion in a Jim Shooter two part story that shows the future of the future heroes in two episodes drawn by Curt Swan and George Klein. The cover is by Ernie Chua and John Calnan. (2/17)

WEIRD WAR TALES (46, May-June). War in the subway is featured in "Kill Or Be Killed" by Jack Oleck and George Evans. Also, "The Voodoo Warrior" is by George Kashdan and Buddy Gernale and a new Day After Doomsday episode is by Steve Skeates, Steve Ditko and Vince Colletta. The cover is by Leopoldo Duranona. (2/17)

ALL-STAR COMICS (60, May-June). The JSA and Super Squad face their first new villain in "Vulcan: Son Of Fire" by Gerry Conway, Keith Giffen and Wally Wood. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/17)



CLAW THE UNCONQUERED (7, May-June). Claw and Ghilikin discover the secret of the Grimstone but find that to recover it they must destroy "The People Of The Maelstrom' by David Michelinie and Ernie Chua. Cover is by Chua. (2/17)

BLITZKRIEG (3, May-June). The Nazis are featured in "The Execution" and ' The Partisans" by Bob Kanigher and Ric Estrada. Plus, a table-top diorama by Sam Glanzman. The cover is by Joe Kubert. (2/19)

THE SECRET SOCIETY OF SUPER-VILLAINS (1, May-June). A fun little band who've joined for reasons of greed and a mutual foe, this newest of super-groups include these favorite bad-guys: Captain Cold, Mirror Master, Super Gorilla Grodd, Copperhead, Sinestro, The Wizard, Captain Boomerang, a new Star Sapphire and a Manhunter clone. Gerry Conway

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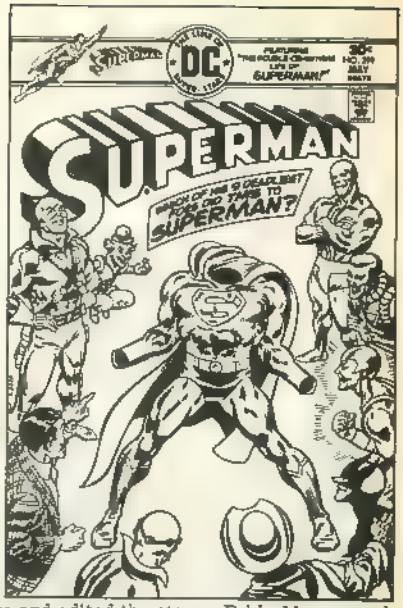


wrote and edited the story, Pablo Marcos and Bob Smith drew it. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/19)

THE FLASH (241, May). The Flash and the Mirror Master find themselves usually on opposite sides of the law -- but this time it's Mirror Master as the lawman and Flash as the thief in "Steal, Flash, Steal" by Cary Bates,

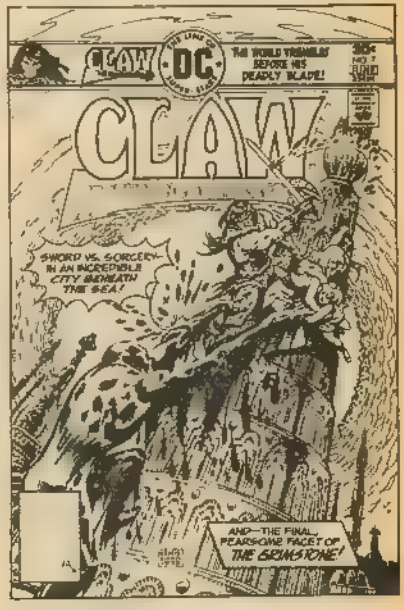
Irv Novick and Frank McLaughlin. The latest chapter of the Ravagers of Olys serial in Green Lantern's strip is called "To Kill A Star" by Denny O'Neil, Mike Grell and Tex Blaisdell. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/19)

TARZAN FAMILY (63, May-June). Korak is led into a trap by the 'Song Of The Dolphin' by Bob Kanigher and the Redondo studios.

John Carter Of Mars stars in a new solo tale by Kanigher and Rudy Zamora, Carson Napier of Venus is featured in "Gathering Tarel" by Len Wein and Mike Kaluta, and newspaper strip reprints by Hal Foster and Russ Manning comprise the issue. The cover is by Joe Kubert. (2/19)

RICHARD DRAGON, KUNG FU FIGHTER (8, May). Slash returns to attempt to kill Dragon but Lady Shiva intervenes in "To Slay The Blind Dragon!" by Denny O'Neil, Ric Estrada and Wally Wood. The cover is by Dick Giordano. (2/24)

BLACKHAWK (246, May-June). Boris, the 8th Blackhawk from long ago and Anti-Man, battle the Black Knights in "Death's Deadly Pawn" by Steve Skeates, Ric Estrada and George Evans. The cover is by Dick Giordano. (2/24)


CLAW
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CLAW
SWORD VS. SORCERY IN AN INCREDIBLE CITY BENEATH THE SEA!
AND—THE FINAL FEARSOME FACET OF THE GRIMSTONE!

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G.I. COMBAT (190, May). The Haunted Tank crew must deal not only with war, but also with "The Tiger And The Terrier" in this tale by Bob Kanigher and Sam Glanzman. Backup is "The Gentleman G.I." by Wesley Marsh and E.R. Cruz. The cover is by Luis Dominguez. (2/24)

THE UNEXPECTED (173, May-June). Featured in this issue are "What Scared Sally?" by Murray Boltinoff and Fred Carillo, "The Imprisoned Brain" and "Hunger Of The Dying" by Jack Phillips and Tenny Henson. The cover is by Luis Dominguez. (2/24)

DETECTIVE COMICS (459, May). A story fashioned after the Ellery Queen mysteries is presented in this issue with "A Clue Before Dying" and is Marty Pasko's first Batman job. It's drawn by Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez. Plus,

Man-Bat is featured in "Scream Of The Gargoyle' by Pasko and Pablo Marcos. The cover is by Ernie Chua. (2/26)

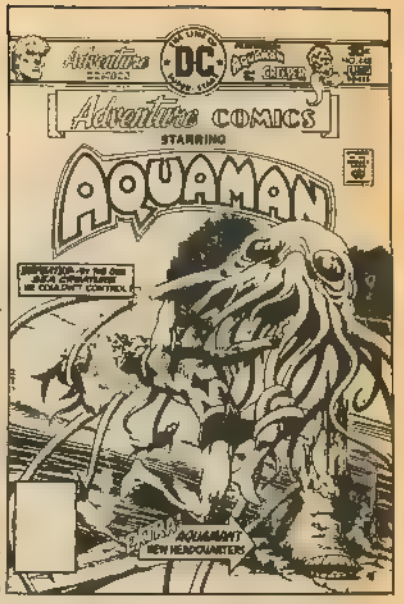
ACTION COMICS (459, May). Blackrock, the super-hero sensation created by a WGBS rival, battles the Man of Steel in "Superman's Big Crack-Up' by Elliot Maggin, Curt Swan and Bob Oksner. The Private Life Of Clark Kent switches over to ACTION and begins with "Two For The Taxi" by Nelson Bridwell, Swan and Oksner. Cover is also by Oksner. (2/26)

ADVENTURE COMICS (445, May-June). Now forced into exile, the Aquaman family moves into a new headquarters as Aquaman faces another underwater race in "Toxxin's Revenge" by David Michelinie and Jim Aparo. And that Hairy Harlequin, The Creeper, makes his ADVENTURE advent in the first of a three parter, Deadly Medicine" by Martin Pasko, Ric Estrada and Joe Staton. The cover is by Aparo. (2/26)

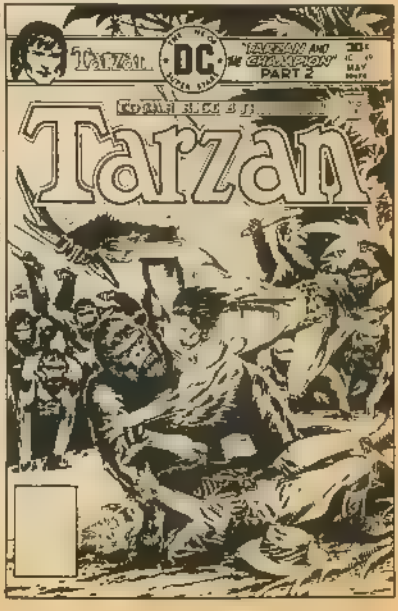
TARZAN (249, May). The last chapter of Joe Kubert's editorial stint is entitled The Champion" by Kubert and the Redondo studio. Next issue, Joe Orlando takes over as editor. The cover is by Kubert. (2/26)

OUR FIGHTING FORCES (167, May-June). It s back to bi-monthly for The Losers who star in 'A Front Seat In Hell" by Bob Kanigher and George Evans. Gunner and Sarge solo in their own backup adventure, "The G.I. In The Bull's Eye" by Murray Boltinoff and E. R. Cruz. The cover is by Luis Domingues. (2/26)

THE AMAZING WORLD OF DC COMICS Convention Special (1, 1976). Given away free to attendees of the DC Convention, this special



issue will also be available for $2.50 from DC. Contents include "A Short History Of DC" by Tony Tollin, ' Costume Party Capers' by Jack Harris, "Once A Year..." by Carl Gafford and other articles on comics collecting, Superman, the Superman films and how to make custom models of all the DC heroes. (2/28)



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